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ABSTRACT

This booklet presents the action plan developed by the Southern Regional Task Force on Child Care for improving the quality of early care and education (ECE) in southern states. Also included in the booklet are tables that represent data collected from 16 participating states and the District of Columbia on state child care quality standards and initiatives, including licensing standards. The survey findings were used as a key references in developing the 7 goals and 39 action steps of the action plan addressing child care for children from birth through age 12. The goals of the plan are as follows: (1) all children and families will have the benefit of a quality, comprehensive, and coordinated ECE system; (2) rigorous licensing requirements and/or regulatory processes will be enacted to ensure that children are adequately protected in all ECE settings; (3) states will support development of quality ECE programs; (4) staff in ECE settings will be appropriately credentialed and adequately compensated; (5) families will have the information to make well-informed decisions about the quality of their child's care and education, to be actively involved in their child's care and education; (6) quality ECE programs will be financially accessible to all children; (7) states will ensure that accountability is built into all systems, programs, and activities undertaken to achieve the goals of this action plan. For each of the goals, relevant action steps are listed. (KB)

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Southern Regional Task Force on Child Care

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October 2002

Southern Regional Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education

PS 030940

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Southern Regional Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education

Southern Regional Task Force on Child Care

October 2002

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Introduction

"The developmental effects of child care depend on its safety, the opportunities it provides for nurturing and stable relationships and its provision of linguistically and cognitively rich environments. Yet the child care that is available in the United States today is highly fragmented and characterized by marked variations in quality, ranging from rich, growth-promoting experiences to unstimulating, highly unstable and sometimes dangerous settings. The burden of poor quality and limited choices rests most heavily on low-income, working families whose financial resources are too high to qualify for subsidies yet too low to afford quality care."

— National Academy of Sciences, 2000

The Southern Institute on Children and Families in January 2000 established the 24-member Southern Regional Task Force on Child Care. Support for the initiative was provided by The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. Appointments to the Task Force were made by 16 southern governors, the mayor of the District of Columbia, the Southern Growth Policies Board and the Southern Institute. The initial charge to the Task Force was to collaborate in the development of a plan of action to improve access to child care financial aid for low-income families in the southern region.

In December 2000, the Task Force met that charge, releasing its first product, a publication titled ***Sound Investments: Financial Support for Child Care Builds Workforce Capacity and Promotes School Readiness***. The report's *Action Plan to Improve Access to Child Care Assistance for Low-Income Families In the South* sets forth 10 goals and 52 action steps calling on public and private sector leaders to support specific initiatives. The Action Plan calls for significant increases in child care resources, eligibility simplification, improved customer services, implementation of tax strategies and creation of employer partnerships. The Action Plan and additional publications of the Southern Regional Initiative on Child Care are listed in the bibliography and are available at www.kidsouth.org.

In January 2001, the Southern Institute received support from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation for an additional two years to continue the work of the Southern Regional Task Force on Child Care. The Task Force focused its efforts on two objectives:

- Δ Implementation of the *Action Plan to Improve Access to Child Care Assistance for Low-Income Families in the South*, including site visits to the southern states and a status report to track progress.
- Δ Development of an action plan to improve the quality of child care in the southern region.

Research has shown that the first three years of life are critical in children's brain development and that quality child care and education in the preschool years can greatly enhance a child's lifetime potential. All too often, however, children from low-income families do not have access to quality early childhood learning opportunities.

Under the guidance of the Southern Institute, the Southern Regional Task Force on Child Care embarked on the development of an action plan to achieve quality early care and education programs. The Staff Work Group provided invaluable assistance with this complex and bold undertaking.

One of the first challenges facing the Task Force was reaching consensus on a definition of "quality." After a lengthy and thoughtful discourse, the Task Force reached agreement that quality child care includes:

- Δ Nurturing, responsive and developmentally appropriate care and education;
- Δ Consistent, educated, trained and professionally compensated early childhood education teachers;
- Δ A safe and stimulating environment; and
- Δ Age-appropriate staff-child ratios and group sizes.

In its accreditation procedures manual, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) notes that accreditation is "one level of quality control." Licensing alone only establishes that a facility meets minimum state-determined health and safety requirements. To be eligible for NAEYC accreditation, programs must be licensed and in good standing. NAEYC defines a high-quality early childhood program as "one that meets the needs of and promotes the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of the children and adults — parents, staff and administrators — who are involved in the program."

The Task Force determined that information must be collected from southern states to lay the groundwork for the action plan on quality. The Southern Institute conducted a survey of the 16 southern states and the District of Columbia to collect data on each state's quality standards and initiatives, including licensing standards, and to compare state standards with accreditation standards developed by NAEYC.

The Southern Institute quality survey was sent to child care administrators, licensing officials and advocacy groups in each of the southern states. States and public/private representatives who participated in the survey are listed below:

Alabama (administrator, licensing, advocate)
Arkansas (administrator, licensing)
District of Columbia (administrator, licensing, advocate)
Florida (licensing)
Georgia (administrator, licensing)
Kentucky (administrator, licensing, advocate)
Louisiana (administrator, licensing, advocate)
Maryland (administrator, licensing)
Mississippi (administrator, licensing)
Missouri (administrator, licensing, advocate)
North Carolina (administrator, licensing, advocate)
Oklahoma (administrator, licensing, advocate)
South Carolina (administrator, licensing, advocate)
Tennessee (administrator, licensing, advocate)
Texas (administrator, licensing, advocate)
Virginia (administrator, licensing, advocate)
West Virginia (administrator, licensing, advocate)

Task Force members used results from the state survey as a key reference in developing the *Southern Regional Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education.* The Action Plan presented below addresses child care for children from birth through age 12. The Action Plan sets forth a "gold standard" that the Task Force feels every southern state should achieve on behalf of all children in early care and education. The Southern Institute will monitor developments during the upcoming year and will issue a report on the status of implementation efforts.

Southern Regional Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education

Vision Statement

All children who are in early care and education programs will be in environments that are safe, nurturing and encourage their development.

GOAL 1

All children and families will have the benefit of a quality, comprehensive and coordinated early care and education system.

Action Steps

1.1 Public policy at the federal, state and local level will require planning and coordination across major systems to improve quality, including Head Start, state pre-kindergarten, subsidized child care and licensing.

1.2 Public policy at the federal, state and local level will support families by linking early care and education programs to health coverage, physical and mental health care, nutrition, economic support, transportation and parenting education services.

1.3 Federal, state and local policies and systems will ensure coordinated, seamless transitions for children moving among early care and education programs and into kindergarten.

GOAL 2

Rigorous licensing requirements and/or regulatory processes will be enacted to ensure that children are adequately protected in all early care and education settings.

Action Steps

2.1 States will establish staff-child ratios and maximum group sizes for centers and homes that meet NAEYC (National Association for the

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GOAL 2 (continued)

Education of Young Children), NAFCC (National Association of Family Child Care), APHA (American Public Health Association) or AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) national standards.

2.2 States will develop and enforce health, fire and safety requirements for all early care and education settings that reflect standards set forth by the APHA and the AAP.

2.3 State law will require strict enforcement of licensing requirements. States will use a range of sanctions that will include license revocation when a provider is unable or unwilling to meet requirements.

2.4 States will conduct at least three unannounced monitoring visits per year to verify compliance with requirements.

2.5 States will require that child care providers, early childhood teachers and others who have regular access to children in early childhood settings have federal and state background checks using fingerprinting and screening against the state child abuse registry.

2.6 States will ensure that all licensing and early care and education staff are educated in recognizing signs of child abuse and are trained in the state's child abuse reporting laws.

2.7 States will have a well-trained regulatory workforce with average caseloads between 50 and 75 per staff person and a system capable of providing technical assistance.

2.8 States will ensure parental right of access to their child's early care and education facilities.

GOAL 3

States will support development of quality early care and education programs for all children.

Action Steps

3.1 States will provide all early care and education providers with resources to help them improve the quality of care and education they deliver, such as technical assistance and training, accreditation support, grants to meet health and safety requirements and grants to support family child care home networks.

GOAL 3 (continued)

3.2 States will have Child Care Resource and Referral networks to deliver quality early care and education enhancement support services to providers, such as outreach, training and technical assistance.

3.3 States will implement a rating system to recognize providers for incremental levels of quality.

3.4 States will implement tax and other incentives to develop and expand early care and education programs that demonstrate a higher level of quality.

3.5 States will use a formal mechanism to seek parental input in program evaluations and will use that information in making policy decisions related to early care and education programs.

3.6 States will identify and support the use of effective research-based curricula.

GOAL 4

Staff in early care and education settings will be appropriately credentialed and adequately compensated.

Action Steps

4.1 States will maintain a professional development system that ensures, at a minimum, providers in early care and education settings meet standards set forth by NAEYC, NAFCC, APHA or AAP.

4.2 States will require approved ongoing annual professional development for staff, appropriate to their education levels and job requirements, as specified in APHA and AAP. States will provide and implement a professional development system that verifies trainers, approves training and tracks the training of participants.

4.3 The federal government and states will provide universally available, comprehensive scholarships to early care and education providers who are pursuing a Child Development Associate (CDA) or two- or four-year degree in child development, early childhood education, early childhood special education or child care administration. Scholarships will address the costs of tuition, fees and books and will support components such as travel costs, paid release time and child care.

GOAL 4 (continued)

4.4 States will work with educational institutions to ensure that coursework is accessible in order to meet the early care and education workforce training needs, such as courses offered at night, on weekends, in accelerated formats, on-line and in various languages. Courses will address the varying educational levels of the workforce.

4.5 The federal government and states will provide financial incentives that reward completion of approved levels of professional development.

4.6 The federal government and states will provide college loan forgiveness programs for persons earning an approved degree who work for a specified period of time in early care and education programs.

4.7 States will work toward a system whereby staff with approved degrees or credentials will receive employment benefits and compensation at comparable levels to the state's public education system.

4.8 States will ensure meaningful agreements and processes to enable the transfer of credits between and among approved two- and four-year degree programs.

GOAL 5

Families will have the information to make well-informed decisions about the quality of their child's care and education and to be actively involved in their child's care and education.

Action Steps

5.1 States will support Child Care Resource and Referral networks that are easily accessible to parents and that provide information on child development, quality indicators, provider choices, vacancies and linkages to additional information.

5.2 States will support early care and education providers in promoting parental involvement and in seeking parental input into the development and improvement of their programs.

GOAL 6

Quality early care and education programs will be financially accessible to all children.

Action Steps

6.1 Federal and state governments will adjust the child care tax credit expense limits to accurately reflect the cost of quality care.

6.2 States with income taxes will establish refundable child and dependent care tax credits.

6.3 State and federal child and dependent care tax credit income-eligibility and expense limits will be indexed for inflation.

6.4 Federal, state, local and private funds will be sufficient to meet 100% of the need for direct early care and education financial aid, based on initial eligibility levels at 85% of the state median income. Federal law will allow and states will implement redetermination policies that allow families to retain early care and education financial aid until they reach 100% of the state median income.

6.5 Federal and state governments should develop policies and systems to ensure families receiving financial aid pay no more than 10% of their gross income for early care and education.

6.6 States will set payment rates at no less than the 75th percentile based on a market rate survey conducted every two years for each level and type of care. Annual inflation adjustments to payment rates will be made between market surveys.

6.7 States will implement payments to providers commensurate with the quality-rating level achieved by the early care and education programs.

6.8 States will examine the financing of quality early care and education in their state and work toward providing payment rates that recognize the cost commensurate with the standards set forth in this action plan.

6.9 States will design and aggressively implement outreach initiatives to provide families with easy-to-understand early care and education financial aid information and application assistance.

GOAL 7

States will ensure that accountability is built into all systems, programs and activities undertaken to achieve the goals of this action plan.

Action Steps

7.1 States will convene appropriate stakeholders to develop written strategic plans for improving the quality of early care and education programs in the state. These plans will include key goals, quantifiable measures of progress and program outcomes for all quality enhancement activities.

7.2 States will collect and analyze data and produce written annual reports on progress toward identified goals. Reports will be made readily available to the public.

7.3 States will use data and annual reports to make continuous policy improvements and evaluate quality enhancement activities.

References

American Public Health Association and American Academy of Pediatrics, Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards — Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs (Washington, DC: American Public Health Association, 2002).

National Association for the Education of Young Children, Accreditation Criteria & Procedures of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1998).

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Table 1
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Number and Percentage of Children Under 6 Living with Parents in the Labor Force

State	Living with Two Parents		Living with One Parent	
	Number of Children Both Parents Working	Percentage of Children Both Parents Working	Number of Children Single Parent Working	Percentage of Children Single Parent Working
United States	8,162,027	53.9%	4,993,026	75.5%
Alabama	120,363	54.9%	85,798	73.8%
Arkansas	76,305	59.5%	49,170	69.8%
Delaware	21,163	59.5%	16,817	80.4%
District of Columbia	7,569	62.7%	17,228	75.6%
Florida	389,575	56.8%	284,741	78.5%
Georgia	219,751	50.4%	184,313	76.2%
Kentucky	107,983	51.7%	67,611	75.1%
Louisiana	106,508	51.8%	103,247	70.7%
Maryland	167,169	61.5%	101,102	76.6%
Mississippi	76,299	63.0%	80,040	77.8%
Missouri	169,301	59.0%	109,841	78.9%
North Carolina	237,133	59.1%	144,251	78.2%
Oklahoma	85,419	47.8%	64,728	79.0%
South Carolina	104,076	54.4%	65,013	70.1%
Tennessee	156,284	55.0%	103,866	72.9%
Texas	617,771	49.2%	402,061	71.7%
Virginia	233,001	57.8%	107,842	81.2%
West Virginia	38,144	52.7%	24,129	62.2%

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, derived from Census 2000 data.

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Table 2
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 1 - Coordinated Systems
State Child Care Subsidy Program Efforts to Collaborate with Other Publicly Supported Early Childhood Programs

	Pre-Kindergarten		Head Start	
State	Collaboration	Assistance to Providers in Meeting Public School Standards	Collaboration	Assistance to Providers in Meeting Head Start Standards
Alabama	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Arkansas	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District of Columbia	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Georgia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kentucky	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Louisiana	No	No	Yes	No
Maryland	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Mississippi	No	No	No	No
Missouri	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
North Carolina	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Oklahoma	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
South Carolina	No	No	Yes	Yes
Tennessee	No	No	Yes	Yes
Texas	Yes	No	Yes	No
Virginia	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
West Virginia	No	No	Yes	Yes

Note: Florida did not respond to the Child Care Administrator Survey.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

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Table 3
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 2 - Licensing and Regulatory Processes
Percentage of Subsidized Children by State Monitoring or Regulatory Policies

State	Percentage of Subsidized Children			
	Regulatory Policies		Monitoring Policies	
	Unregulated	Regulated Care	Care is Not Monitored	Care is Monitored
Alabama	21%	79%	21%	79%
Arkansas	0%	100%	0%	100%
District of Columbia	0%	100%	< 1%	> 99%
Georgia	0%	100%	< 1%	> 99%
Kentucky	0%	100%	24%	76%
Louisiana	0%	100%	0%	100%
Maryland	0%	100%	0%	100%
Missouri	34%	66%	34%	66%
North Carolina	3%	97%	3%	97%
Oklahoma	0%	100%	0%	100%
South Carolina	12%	88%	12%	88%
Tennessee	0%	100%	10%	90%
Texas	18%	82%	18%	82%
Virginia	14%	86%	15%	85%
West Virginia	0%	100%	8%	92%

Note: Florida did not respond to the Child Care Administrator Survey. Mississippi did not provide responses to this question.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

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Table 4
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 2 - Licensing and Regulatory Processes
State Licensing Standards for the Maximum Number of Children Allowed to Be Cared For by One Adult in Licensed Child Care Centers

Age of Child	6 Months	13 Months	25 Months	37 Months	4+ Years
NAEYC Standards[1]	1:3 - 1:4	1:3 - 1:5	1:4 - 1:6	1:7 - 1:10	1:8 - 1:10
State					
Alabama	1:6	1:6	1:8	1:12	1:20
Arkansas[2]	1:6	1:6	1:9	1:12	1:15
District of Columbia	1:4	1:4	1:4	1:8	1:10
Florida	1:4	1:6	1:11	1:15	1:20
Georgia	1:6	1:6	1:10	1:15	1:18
Kentucky	1:5	1:6	1:10	1:12	1:14
Louisiana	1:5	1:7	1:11	1:13	1:15
Maryland	1:3	1:3	1:6	1:10	1:10
Mississippi	1:5	1:9	1:12	1:14	1:16
Missouri	1:4	1:4	1:8	1:10	1:10
North Carolina	1:5	1:6	1:10	1:15	1:20
Oklahoma	1:4	1:6	1:8	1:12	1:15
South Carolina[3]	1:6	1:6	1:10	1:13	1:18
Tennessee[4]	1:4	1:4-1:6	1:6-1:7	1:9	1:15
Texas	1:4	1:5	1:13	1:17	1:20
Virginia	1:4	1:4	1:10	1:10	1:12
West Virginia	1:4	1:4	1:4	1:8	1:12
Number of States Below Standards	8	10	13	11	14
Number of States Meeting Standards	9	7	4	6	3

[1] National Association for the Education of Young Children - Ratios vary based on number of children in a group.
[2] Arkansas sets higher standards for providers participating in the state funded Pre-Kindergarten program, Arkansas' Better Chance.
[3] South Carolina has established more stringent staff:child ratios for providers voluntarily agreeing to meet higher subsidy standards.
[4] Ratios effective July 1, 2002.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Licensing Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 5
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 2 - Licensing and Regulatory Processes
State Licensing Standards for the Maximum Number of Children Allowed in a Group in Licensed Child Care Centers

Age of Child	6 Months	13 Months	25 Months	37 Months	4+ Years
NAEYC Standards[1]	6-8	6-12	8-12	14-20	16-20
State					
Alabama	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards
Arkansas[2]	12	12	18	24	30
District of Columbia	8	8	8	16	20
Florida	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards
Georgia	12	12	20	30	36
Kentucky	10	12	20	24	28
Louisiana	10	14	11	13	15
Maryland	6	6	12	20	20
Mississippi	10	10	14	14	20
Missouri	8	8	8	No Standards	No Standards
North Carolina	10	12	20	25	25
Oklahoma	8	12	16	24	30
South Carolina	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards
Tennessee	8	8-12	12-14	18	20
Texas	10	13	22-26	30-34	35
Virginia	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards	No Standards
West Virginia	10	10	10	No Standards	No Standards
Number of States with No Standards	4	4	4	6	6
Number of States Below Standards	8	2	7	6	6
Number of States that Meet Standards	5	11	6	5	5

[1] National Association for the Education of Young Children - Ratios based on number and ages of children.

[2] Arkansas sets higher standards for providers participating in the state funded Pre-Kindergarten program, Arkansas' Better Chance.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Licensing Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 6
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 2 - Licensing and Regulatory Processes
State Regulatory Policies and Practices Related to Child Care Facility Monitoring Visits

State	Number of Monitoring Visits Per Year	Hours Spent Per Monitoring Visit		Periodic Monitoring Visit is Unannounced	Facility Caseload for Monitoring Staff (NAEYC Caseload Standard is 50-75)
		Centers	Homes		
Alabama[1]	0.5	6-8	4-6	Yes	42
Arkansas	3	2.5	1.5	Yes	68
District of Columbia	1	4	2	Yes	73
Florida[2]	3	3	1.5-2	No	49
Georgia	1	6	2-4	No	137
Kentucky	1	4-5	4-5	No	60
Louisiana	1	5.25	1	Yes	Data Not Provided
Maryland[3]	1	4	1.9	Yes	Data Not Provided
Mississippi[4]	2	2	2	Yes	103
Missouri	2	2.5	2	Yes	68
North Carolina	1	4.5	2	Yes	71
Oklahoma	3	1.5	1	Yes	54
South Carolina	2	2-3	1-2	No	73
Tennessee[5]	7	Data Not Provided	Data Not Provided	Yes	30
Texas	1	2.4	2.4	No	85
Virginia[6]	2	3.5	2.5	Yes	98
West Virginia	1	3	Data Not Provided	No	80

[1] Data for facility caseloads applies to centers only; incomplete data on homes.

[2] Family day care receives two monitoring visits per year.

[3] 20% of centers selected randomly for unannounced inspection each year. 100% of homes receive an unannounced inspection every other year.

[4] For Mississippi, visits to a facility for routine inspections, i.e. mid-year and renewal, generally last between two hours to 2-3 days, depending on the size of the facility.

[5] Only the first of seven visits is announced.

[6] Three visits per year for Family Day System Homes.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Licensing Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 7
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 2 - Licensing and Regulatory Processes
State Policy Requirements for Background Checks
On Child Care Center Staff

State	Background Check By Fingerprints		State Background Check By Name	State Check of Name Against Child Abuse Register
	Federal	State		
Alabama	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Arkansas	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
District of Columbia	No	No	No	No
Florida	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Georgia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Kentucky	No	No	Yes	Yes
Louisiana	No	No	Yes	No
Maryland	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Mississippi	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Missouri	No	No	Yes	Yes
North Carolina[1, 2]	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Oklahoma	No	No	Yes	No
South Carolina	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Tennessee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Texas[3]	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Virginia	No	No	Yes	Yes
West Virginia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

[1] North Carolina requires a federal check by fingerprints only if they have not lived in North Carolina in the past five years.

[2] North Carolina requires that, once a month, the state data base is cross checked against the North Carolina Sex Offender Public Protection Registry.

[3] Federal check by fingerprint required only if recently moved to Texas from another state.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Licensing Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 8
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 2 - Licensing and Regulatory Processes
Required Training Topics by State Licensing Standards for Licensed Child Care Staff

State	Training Topics				
	Safety	Health	CPR	First Aid	Detection of Abuse
Alabama	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Arkansas[1]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District of Columbia	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Florida	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Georgia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kentucky	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Louisiana	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Maryland[2]	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Mississippi	No	No	No	No	No
Missouri	No	No	No	No	No
North Carolina	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oklahoma	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
South Carolina	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Tennessee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Texas	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Virginia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
West Virginia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

[1] Arkansas mandates Safety Training for directors only.

[2] Maryland requires that each center have at least one staff member present for every 20 children in care who is currently certified in CPR and First Aid.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Licensing Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 9
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 2 - Licensing and Regulatory Processes
(Also Goal 5 - Parental Relationships)
State Licensing Standards for Parent Involvement Required for Licensed Child Care Centers

State	Parents Have Unrestricted Access to Child Care Facility	Parent Meetings	Parent/Teacher Conferences	Parent Satisfaction Survey
Alabama	Yes	No	Yes	No
Arkansas	Yes	No	No	No
District of Columbia	Yes	Yes	No	No
Florida	No	No	No	No
Georgia	Yes	No	No	No
Kentucky	Yes	No	No	No
Louisiana	Yes	No	No	No
Maryland	Yes	No	No	No
Mississippi	No	No	No	No
Missouri	Yes	No	No	No
North Carolina	Yes	No	No	No
Oklahoma[1]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
South Carolina	No	No	No	No
Tennessee	Yes	No	No	No
Texas	Yes	No	No	No
Virginia	Yes	No	No	No
West Virginia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

[1] Centers must offer 3 of 8 parent involvement options.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Licensing Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 10
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 3 - Quality Improvement
Initiatives to Improve Quality Used in More than Half the States

Quality Initiative	Number of States Employing Initiative
Resource and referral programs.	17
Provides services and support to address the additional needs of Special Needs children.	17
Availability of technical assistance to providers.	17
Collaboration with Head Start.	16
Collaboration with Head Start that includes providing assistance to providers to meet Head Start standards.	16
Support for national accreditation.	16
Student loans or scholarships for child care workers.	16
Mentoring programs for professional development of child care staff.	16
Consumer education.	16
Community partnerships.	15
Public awareness on brain development of very young children and the implication for providers.	15
Partnerships with business.	14
Upgrading facilities/programs to exceed licensing standards.	14
Literacy for children in care.	14
Language development activities for children.	14
Parent satisfaction surveys.	14
Public awareness on brain development of very young children and the implication for providers.	14
Public awareness on brain development of very young children and the implication for policy makers.	14
Career development system coordinated with higher education system.	14
Collaboration with Pre-Kindergarten.	13
Provider satisfaction surveys.	13
Basic parent education printed material.	13
Regulated family child care networks.	12
Collaboration with Pre-Kindergarten that includes assisting providers in meeting public school standards.	12
Literacy for adults.	12
Credentialing or licensing system for child care workers.	11
Tiered reimbursement.	11
English as a second language.	11
Training for eligibility workers/resource and referral workers in basic parent education.	11
Credentialing system for child care administrators.	11
Coordinated state planning systems.	11
Coordinated local planning systems with oversight authority.	10
Increase wages for child care staff that complete specific training or education courses.	10
Enhance benefits for child care staff.	10
Coordinated state planning systems with oversight authority.	10
Enhance benefits for child care staff that complete specific training or education courses.	9
Coordinated local planning systems.	9

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator, Child Care Licensing Administrator and Advocate). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

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Table 11
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 3 - Quality Improvement
Top 12 Quality Initiatives Rated Most Often by Survey Respondents as Having a "Very Good Impact" on Improving Quality

Resource and Referral programs.
Student loans or scholarships for child care workers.
Availability of technical assistance to providers.
Upgrading facilities/programs to exceed licensing standards.
Health consultants.
Tiered reimbursement.
Community partnerships.
Collaboration with Head Start.
Collaboration with Head Start that includes assisting providers.
Support for national accreditation.
Provides services and support to address the additional needs of Special Needs children.
Credentialing system for workers.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator, Child Care Licensing Administrator and Advocate). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 12
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 3 - Quality Improvement
(Also Goal 4 - Professional Credentials and Compensation)
States Offering Support to Child Care Programs Seeking National Accreditation

State	Provides Incentives For National Accreditation
Alabama	Yes
Arkansas	Yes
District of Columbia	Yes
Georgia	Yes
Kentucky	Yes
Louisiana	Yes
Maryland	Yes
Mississippi	No
Missouri	Yes
North Carolina	Yes
Oklahoma	Yes
South Carolina	Yes
Tennessee	Yes
Texas	Yes
Virginia	No
West Virginia	Yes

Note: Florida did not respond to the Child Care Administrator Survey.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

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Table 13
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 3 - Quality Improvement
State Child Care Subsidy Policies Established to Improve Quality

State	Allocates More Funding than the 4% Required by The Child Care and Development Fund for Quality Initiatives	Sets Provider Standards That Are Higher Than Licensing Standards	Provides Technical Assistance or Grants to Exceed Licensing Standards	Provides Multi-Level Reimbursement for Incremental Levels of Quality
Alabama	No	No	Yes	No
Arkansas[1]	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
District of Columbia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Georgia[2]	No	Yes	Yes	No
Kentucky	No	No	Yes	Yes
Louisiana	No	No	No	No
Maryland	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Mississippi	No	No	Yes	Yes
Missouri	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
North Carolina	No	No	Yes	Yes
Oklahoma	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
South Carolina	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tennessee	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Texas	No	No	Yes	Yes
Virginia	Yes	No	No	No
West Virginia	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note: Florida did not respond to the Child Care Administrator Survey.

[1] Arkansas sets provider standards that are higher than licensing standards for centers.

[2] Georgia sets provider standards that are higher than licensing standards for legally exempt family child care homes. Georgia began piloting a tiered reimbursement program in January 2002.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 14
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 3 - Quality Improvement
State Child Care Subsidy Policies to Improve Quality of Family Child Care Homes

State	Networks for Family Child Care Homes	Networks for Legally Exempt Family Child Care Homes	Child Care Subsidy Standards for Legally Exempt Family Child Care Homes	Monitor Legally Exempt Family Child Care Homes
Alabama	Yes	Yes	No	No
Arkansas	Yes	No	No	No
District of Columbia	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Georgia	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Kentucky[1]	No	No	No	No
Louisiana	No	No	No	No
Maryland	Yes	Yes	No	No
Mississippi	No	No	No	No
Missouri	Yes	Yes	No	No
North Carolina	No	No	Yes	No
Oklahoma	Yes	No	No	No
South Carolina	No	No	Yes	No
Tennessee	Yes	No	No	Yes
Texas	No	No	No	No
Virginia	No	No	No	No
West Virginia	No	No	No	Yes

Note: Florida did not respond to the Child Care Administrator Survey.

[1] Kentucky monitors unregulated care upon receipt of a complaint.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 15
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 3 - Quality Improvement
(Also Goal 6 - Financial Support)
State Child Care Subsidy Rate Policies That Promote Quality

State	Employ a Tiered Reimbursement System	Adjust Rates Annually From Market Rate Survey	Set Rates At or Above 75th Percentile of Market Rates	Pay Above 75th Percentile for Special Circumstances
Alabama	No	No	No	No
Arkansas[1]	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
District of Columbia	Yes	No	No	Yes
Georgia[2]	No	No	No	No
Kentucky	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Louisiana	No	No	No	No
Maryland	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Mississippi	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Missouri	Yes	No	No	No
North Carolina	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Oklahoma	Yes	No	No	No
South Carolina[3]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tennessee	Yes	Yes	No	No
Texas	Yes	No	No	No
Virginia	No	No	No	Yes
West Virginia	Yes	No	No	Yes

Note: Florida did not respond to the Child Care Administrator Survey.

[1] Arkansas adjusts rates annually based on State Median Income. Market Rate Survey is conducted biannually.

[2] Georgia began piloting a tiered reimbursement program in January 2002.

[3] South Carolina establishes rates above the 75th percentile; information provided in State Survey on Quality Child Care.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator) and from *Survey Results on the Status of State Implementation*, February 2002. State Survey on Quality Child Care requested information as of July 1, 2001.

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Table 16
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 4 - Professional Credentials and Compensation
Licensing Standards Related to Number of Annual Training Hours Required for Staff in Licensed Child Care Centers

State	Director	Teacher
Alabama	24	12
Arkansas[1]	18	10
District of Columbia[2]	No Standards	No Standards
Florida	8	8
Georgia	10	10
Kentucky	12	12
Louisiana	12	12
Maryland	6	3
Mississippi[3]	15	15
Missouri	12	12
North Carolina[4]	5-20	5-20
Oklahoma	20	12
South Carolina	20	15
Tennessee[5]	18	12
Texas	20	15
Virginia	8	8
West Virginia	No Standards	No Standards

[1] Arkansas requires higher standards for state funded public Pre-Kindergarten programs: 30 hours for director and teacher, 20 hours for teacher's aid.
[2] The District of Columbia requires 18-24 hours for providers participating in child care subsidy program. More than half of all providers are part of the subsidy system.
[3] Additional training on regulation of playground safety required every two years.
[4] North Carolina has various requirements based on educational levels.
[5] Tennessee requires that directors receive 36 hours the first year and teachers 18 hours the first year.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Licensing Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 17
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 4 - Professional Credentials and Compensation
State Child Care Subsidy Programs Offering Scholarships to Child Care Staff to Improve Their Education and Training

State	Scholarships Offered
Alabama	Yes
Arkansas	Yes
District of Columbia	Yes
Georgia	Yes
Kentucky	Yes
Louisiana	No
Maryland	Yes
Mississippi	Yes
Missouri	Yes
North Carolina	Yes
Oklahoma	Yes
South Carolina	Yes
Tennessee	Yes
Texas	Yes
Virginia	Yes
West Virginia	Yes

Note: Florida did not respond to the Child Care Administrator Survey.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 18
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 4 - Professional Credentials and Compensation
State Child Care Subsidy Programs Offering Financial Support to Increase Wages and Benefits for Child Care Staff

State	Increased Wages	Enhanced Benefits
Alabama	No	Yes
Arkansas	Yes	Yes
District of Columbia	Yes	Yes
Georgia	Yes	Yes
Kentucky	No	No
Louisiana	No	No
Maryland	Yes	Yes
Mississippi	No	Yes
Missouri	Yes	Yes
North Carolina	Yes	Yes
Oklahoma	Yes	No
South Carolina	Yes	No
Tennessee	No	No
Texas	No	No
Virginia[1]	Yes	No
West Virginia	No	No

Note: Florida did not respond to the Child Care Administrator Survey.

[1] Virginia has increased wages, as of July 2002, through an expansion of the T.E.A.C.H. program.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

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Table 19
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 5 - Parental Relationships
Training Topics Required by State Licensing Standards
For Licensed Child Care Center Staff

State	Provides Training on Working with Families
Alabama	Yes
Arkansas[1]	Yes
District of Columbia	No
Florida	Yes
Georgia	No
Kentucky	No
Louisiana	No
Maryland	No
Mississippi	No
Missouri	No
North Carolina	Yes
Oklahoma	No
South Carolina	No
Tennessee	No
Texas	Yes
Virginia	No
West Virginia	Yes

[1] Arkansas mandates training for directors only.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Licensing Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 20
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 5 - Parental Relationships
States Investing Child Care Funds in Quality Initiatives Targeted to Parents

State	Adult Literacy	English as a Second Language	Public Awareness on Brain Development and the Implications for Parents	Basic Parent Education Printed Material	Material on the Importance of Sensitivity and Responsiveness in Caregivers	Parent Satisfaction Survey
Alabama	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Arkansas	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District of Columbia	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Georgia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Kentucky	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Louisiana	No	No	No	No	No	No
Maryland	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Missouri	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
North Carolina	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Oklahoma	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
South Carolina	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Tennessee	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Texas	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Virginia	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
West Virginia	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

Note: Florida did not respond to the Child Care Administrator Survey. Mississippi did not provide responses to this question.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

Table 21
Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education
Goal 6 - Financial Support
Funds Allocated to Child Care in FFY 2001

State	State		Federal		Other		Total
	Percentage	Allocation	Percentage	Allocation	Percentage	Allocation	
North Carolina	48.3%	$254,301,918	51.7%	$271,805,285	0.0%		$526,107,203
Arkansas	38.8%	$15,662,168	60.9%	$24,613,601	0.3%	$125,357	$40,401,126
Virginia	36.0%	$42,877,739	64.0%	$76,319,266	0.0%		$119,197,005
District of Columbia	33.3%	$22,837,038	66.7%	$45,654,128	0.0%		$68,491,166
Maryland	24.0%	$40,617,483	76.0%	$128,336,213	0.0%		$168,953,696
Georgia	22.8%	$53,607,881	77.2%	$181,989,011	0.0%		$235,596,892
Texas[1]	21.5%	$106,122,709	78.5%	$386,912,566	0.0%		$493,035,275
Tennessee	15.7%	$33,000,000	84.3%	$177,200,000	0.0%		$210,200,000
Kentucky	10.7%	$14,800,000	89.3%	$123,400,000	0.0%		$138,200,000
Missouri	10.6%	$13,244,700	89.4%	$111,550,024	0.0%		$124,794,724
Oklahoma	10.5%	$13,600,000	89.5%	$116,170,000	0.0%		$129,770,000
Alabama[2]	9.1%	$9,700,000	90.4%	$96,500,000	0.5%	$580,000	$106,780,000
West Virginia	8.4%	$5,372,843	91.6%	$58,478,811	0.0%		$63,851,654
South Carolina	8.1%	$6,290,817	91.9%	$71,216,960	0.0%		$77,507,777
Louisiana	3.6%	$5,200,000	96.4%	$139,296,409	0.0%		$144,496,409
Mississippi	2.9%	$2,701,026	97.1%	$91,856,660	0.0%		$94,557,686

Notes: Funds may include CCDF, TANF (transferred and direct), SSBG, Pre-Kindergarten Federal Funds, State Funds and "other."
Florida did not respond to the Child Care Administrator Survey.

[1] For Texas, the federal funding sources also include Food Stamps/Title IV-E/Title IV-B/Welfare-to-Work.

[2] For Alabama, the other funding source is Local Funds.

Source: Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2001, derived from data in State Survey on Quality Child Care (Child Care Administrator). Survey requested information as of July 1, 2001.

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